BAY BRIDGE NEWS

We're making history.

APRIL 2012, ISSUE 26

YOUR COMMUNITY, YOUR BRIDGE

CALTRANS BAY AREA TOLL AUTHORITY CALIFORNIA TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

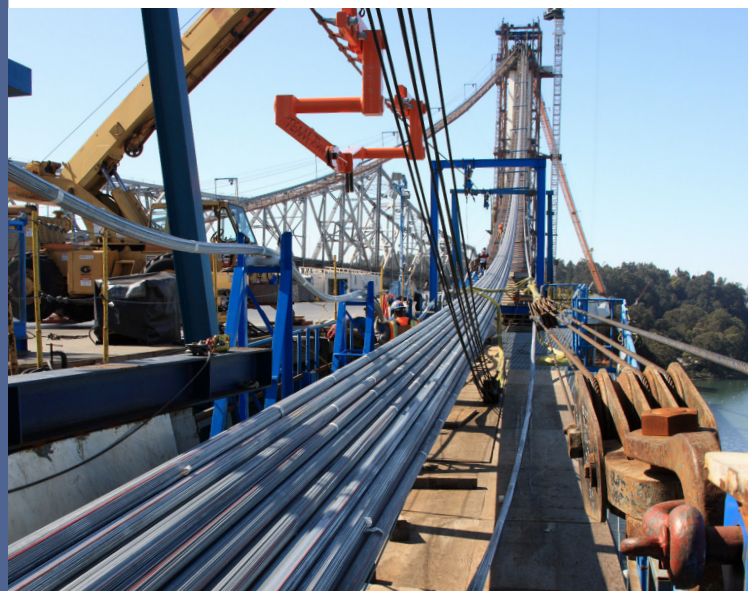
ANOTHER SAS CONSTRUCTION MILESTONE ACHEIVED

The Bay Bridge celebrated another milestone when the last of the 137 strands of the Self-Anchored Suspension Span's single main cable was hauled into place on April 5. The cable is comprised of 137 such strands each made up of 127 wires. There are 17,399 individual steel wires 5mm thick and nearly 1-mile long. In total, the cable weighs nearly 10.6 million pounds. Crews began placing the first strand December 19, 2011 and completed the installation in just four months averaging two strands per day.

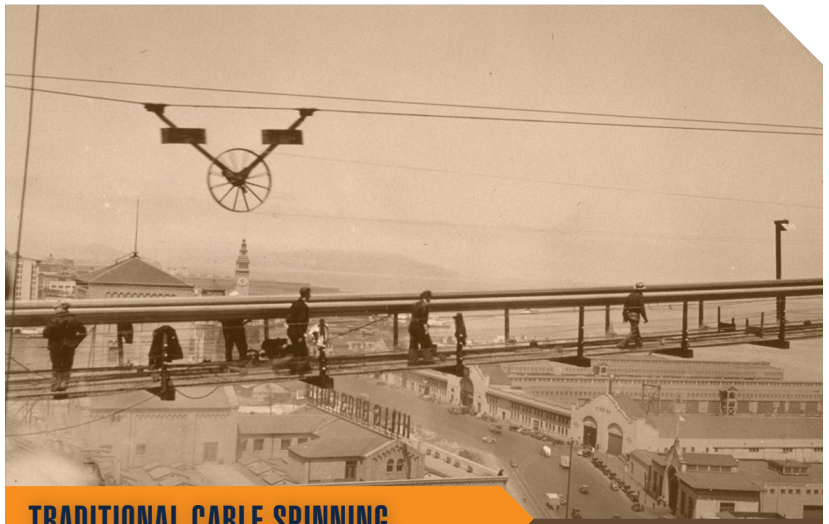
Now that all the strands are in place, workers can begin the process of cable compaction in which the strands are tightly squeezed together to form the circular 2.6-foot-diameter main cable. The compaction process begins at the top of the tower and works its way down the cable, with a hydraulic compactor compressing the strands 1.5 meters at a time.

As all of this work is visible from the existing bridge, motorists are urged to drive safely and keep their eyes on the road. To safely view the progress please visit the new interpretive display located at the end of California Avenue on Treasure Island and the live construction cameras on baybridgeinfo.org.

BayBridgeInfo.org/projects/sas-main-cable.



CABLE STRAND INSTALLATION COMPLETE



TRADITIONAL CABLE SPINNING

The double suspension West Span of the original Bay Bridge has four main cables. Building those mile-long cables was one of the most daunting challenges of the bridge's construction. In 1935, cable spinning was a common process requiring skilled workmen at every juncture. The cables were "spun" using traveling wheels pulling loops of wire from one anchorage to the other and back again. The wire was pulled from spools holding 60 miles of pencil-thick wire. Clanking cow bells were attached to the moving spinning wheels to warn workers of their approach. The wire loops were removed from the wheels and wrapped around cable shoes at the anchorages. Back and forth the wheels went, repeating the process until 17,464 wires had been laid down for each of the four cables. Then, like today, the wires were compacted and banded and wrapped with wire to form the final circular shaped main cable.

Visit ***BayBridgeInfo.org/history*** for more information about the original Bay Bridge.

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